



Town of Acton Recreation Commission

13

MINUTES

DATE: MARCH 3, 2009**7:00 PM****ROOM 126, ACTON TOWN HALL**

ATTENDEES

Recreation Commission members present were Mr. Ron Schlegel, Ms. Karen Jarsky, Mr. Frank Calore and Ms. Kim Bodnar. Also present was Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director, Ms. Terra Friedrichs, Selectman and Ms. Cheryl Getsick, Secretary. Note taker: Cheryl Getsick

AGENDA TOPICS

Meeting called to order at: 7:00 PM

Citizens Concerns:

DISCUSSION

Ms. Friedrichs would like to see the Senior Center/Community Center approved as this will allow the community to have a shelter available which could also be used as a free care clinic. She is able to obtain free medical services from local doctors and nurses. This facility could potentially allow for an ambulance service within the North Acton area. Ms. Friedrichs also supports the Rail Trail and Sidewalks proposals approval by the Sidewalk Committee. Ms. Friedrichs offered to review any proposals prior to submission to the Board of Selectmen to ensure any necessary information is contained within.

CONSENT AGENDA

DISCUSSION

February 3, 2009 minutes

CONCLUSIONS

February 3, 2009 minutes were accepted as amended, 4-0

TOPIC: 2009 Spring/Summer Program Booklet

DISCUSSION

The Spring/Summer program booklet was mailed to Acton and Boxborough residents, businesses and P.O. boxes last week. Ms. Friedrichs offered to take some booklets and deliver them to the various apartment buildings.

CONCLUSIONS

Future classes to be offered, cancellations and publishing errors will be updated on the website.

TOPIC: NARA INFORMATION EVENING

DISCUSSION

March 13, 2009 an information night will be held at the Acton Town Hall and is open for the public to attend. Various instructors will be available to discuss their classes and provide information. Bus trips and NARA Summer Youth Program are beginning to gain enrollments. Mr. Schlegel made a request to contact Community Education and AB Lacrosse regarding illegal parking issues at T.J. O'Grady Skate Park. Mr. Calore suggested Mr. Steve Desy be contact to ensure the officials are informed not to park at the skate park as well. Ms. Fochtman is following up with the Highway Department in obtaining signs to post to help eliminate any illegal parking on the grass and curbside as well. Mr. Calore inquired about handicap access to the lacrosse fields. Mr. Schlegel noted this would be a good question addressed to Mr. Desy.

CONCLUSIONS

Ms. Fochtman will contact Mr. Desy and Erin Bettez from Community Education.

TOPIC: STAFF UPDATES

DISCUSSION

Ms. Fochtman met with some 2008 returnee's staff of the NARA Summer Program. The Recreation Department needs to hire a new Youth Director for the Summer Program. An ad for an on-site director has been placed. In addition, the position of Waterfront Director will also require a new hire as the previous employee has decided not to return. A lot of counselors seem to be returning with only a few openings available. Water safety instructors are also returning. Staff with current CPR and Red Cross Training are returning.

CONCLUSIONS

Ms. Fochtman will continue to look through her applications while anticipating the fiscal situation this year, enrollment may be down. Mr. Schlegel noted though there may be some loss, there could potentially be an increase due to other programs increasing their costs. Recreation is seeing a greater need for scholarships this season.

TOPIC: ACTON BOXBOROUGH COALITION HEALTHY YOUTH

DISCUSSION

Acton Boxborough Coalition Healthy Youth (ABCHY) has been in existence for two (2) years. Ms. Fochtman provided a draft brochure for review by the Recreation Commissioners. This is the Acton Boxborough Coalition for Healthy Youth. The Coalition is represented by nine (9) different organizations/departments, (i.e. Health, Recreation, etc...) ABCHY is attempting to address youth risky behaviors. ABCHY applied for a grant to obtain an Outreach Coordinator who can act as a liaison with the nine (9) organizations. ABCHY wants to find out what the needs are to try to fill gaps between what services are provided and what is required. Ms. Bodnar asked if other organizations have something similar to this type of outreach program. Ms. Fochtman stated this initiative seems to be unique and filling a need. Ms. Jarsky asked how the kids are made aware of this program so they can connect with the organization. Youth representatives are becoming

	involved in the program at the high school. In addition there is a provider networking breakfast which is scheduled. This will provide an opportunity to have the Jr. High & High School counselors meet with providers. This will allow the personnel who have not met in the past to come together and network. Bill Ryan, School Superintendent agrees there is a need for this type of organization at the high school level. Mr. Calore stated the general staff at the high school don't know which children are being served and who are not. Ms. Jan Stewart is the Outreach Coordinator hired by ABCHY. Ms. Stewart has worked in many different arenas. Mr. Schlegel asked the funding source for this program; Ms. Fochtman noted the United Way.
CONCLUSIONS	The brochure is in its draft stage and a decision on the final cover has not yet been determined.
TOPIC: THEATER GROUP	
DISCUSSION	Acton Recreation Department has successfully produced four great shows. The last production was, "Thoroughly Modern Millie". The Director/Producer, Mary Spinoso-Wilson has created her own Chapter 501C3 Company called, Starz'NLightz.
CONCLUSIONS	Ms. Fochtman will follow through with contacting them regarding use of the name Acton Repertory Theater. The Town Manager has requested that they change the name, as it belongs to the Town of Acton.
TOPIC: TOWN COMPOST	
	Recreation is beginning to take the necessary steps to begin a Town of Acton Compost program. Some equipment is in the process of being purchased which will grind the compost. The Compost Operation will be located at the Department of Public Works (DPW). The DPW director, Bruce Stamsky is attempting to involve the local schools. Additionally, the compost can be used at all the field locations. A meeting will be held in the future between, Natural Resources, Mr. Bruce Stamsky and the Recreation Department to determine what the next steps are. Currently, there are programs similar to this in the Towns of Needham and Marblehead. Both locations are also organic. Ms. Fochtman recently became certified by NOFA, New England Organic Farming Association. It is important to ensure the right type of compost develops which means it must be heated to the right temperature, kill weed seed, etc... this is a cutting edge idea but one that is good for the Town of Acton and the residents.
REPORTS	
DISCUSSION	<p>A) Elm Street Update Acton Adult Softball League (AASL) has approached Recreation contemplating going "independent". This would free up time for the Natural Resource staff. The drainage along the baseline at Elm Street softball field is in need of repair. Unfortunately, the staff will most likely not have time to address this issue. The CPA project for a playground remains on hold.</p> <p>b) Morrison Farm Update The plots have been expanded from 24 to 36 plots. Recreation is going to create some additional plots by expanding. Ms. Fochtman will offer a Youth Gardening Program this spring. The designated gardens will become permanent beds for perennials, corn areas and herb gardens. The Board of Selectman or a Land Steward will approve an organically orchard in honor of Ms. Pam Resor who recently retired as our State Senator.</p> <p>c) CPC The CPC voted on which projects to put through for the upcoming Town Meeting. The Commission is being conservative. There will not be any proposals of Recreation projects until the CPA language in the statue is changed. The CPC is recommending \$420K for open space.</p> <p>d) NARA Improvements Recreation is moving ahead with construction of the new storage/changing room behind the stage. Ms. Fochtman informed members the concrete work is going to begin first however the removal of the old concrete and the placement of new footings and a new surface are necessary.</p> <p>e) School Street The Twin Ball Field project approved in 2006 is still considered a viable project therefore the CPC will extend the project's longevity. The Town of Acton has provided expenditures and has met the number of hours to retain this as a viable project. Ms. Fochtman will speak with Mr. Andy McGee and Mr. Steve Ledoux to develop a plan to solidify the lease agreement and to move forward. Mr. Ron Schlegel questioned if a water source was located? Ms. Fochtman responded there is the possibility of having a well installed while considering various options as a backup to operate an irrigation system.</p> <p>f) Open Space and Recreation Plan Nothing new to report</p> <p>g) Playground Update Ms. Fochtman will complete the playground assessment within the next few weeks. Mr. Schlegel asked if any funding is available for Goward Playground. Ms. Fochtman stated, Yes, there is approximately \$3K. Ms. Fochtman will meet with Mr. Shawn O'Malley to develop a list of the various playground and the updates each need. Mr. Calore asked if the timbers would be replaced with plastic or wood. Ms. Fochtman noted Recreation is considering non-treated wooden posts. Mr. Calore recommended placing the various mulch distributions onto the Community Hours for the High School students. Ms. Jarsky asked Ms. Fochtman if Acton Family Network, (AFN) had reached out to her as AFN was looking for some community service projects. At this time, Ms. Fochtman had not been contacted by AFN.</p>

NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION	Nothing to report
MEETING ADJOURNED TIME:	8:45 PM